

## **1999-2000 ACTIVITIES**

### **ISI COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN STATISTICS**

#### **REPORT OF BUSINESS MEETING AND RELATED ACTIONS**

**Thursday, 23 August, 11:45-13:15 pm**

**53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the ISI, Seoul, Korea, 22-29 August 2001**

**Report by the Chair: Beverley Carlson**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Absent:</b>
1. Lynne Billard	1. Heidi Arboleda
2. Beverley Carlson	2. Barbara Bailar
3. Lelia Boeri de Cervetto	3. Nanjamma Chinnappa
4. Denise Lievesley	4. Len Cook
5. Mary Regier	
6. Dennis Trewin	
7. Fred Vogel	

The meeting considered the following topics (also see the attached agenda).

#### **Committee Membership**

Mary Regier, Barbara Bailar and Len Cook stepped down. Fred Vogel joined the Committee. The Committee acknowledges and profoundly thanks Mary Regier for her singular work in organizing the ISI Committee in Women in Statistics and for her major contributions in putting it on track. Thank you Mary.

I will approach the potential candidates for membership that were discussed and will consult further to identify a good member from an African country to fill the third opening. Our main concern is that members will be active participants ready to work, coming from a balance of regions and countries so as to help us to pursue our first priority which is improving the membership of women in the ISI and its sections and more generally outreach to women working in statistics in countries.

#### **Renewal and expansion of women in the ISI and its sections**

I reported on the membership research project that I undertook since Helsinki to focus the problem by identifying countries with an imbalance in membership: male ISI members but few or no women. The Chair wrote letters to some 450 ISI members from these countries apprising them of the situation and

asking them to identify and recommend qualified women. The results of this research were also presented in the ISR December issue: *Women in the Statistics Profession: A Status Report* and presented in Montreux at the Conference of Statistics, Development and Human Rights.

Dennis noted the formation of the *ISI Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Expansion and Renewal* which will prepare recommendations to the Executive Committee during 2001-2002 to reverse the declining and aging membership of the ISI. Denise Lievesley and Beverley Carlson are members of this committee and Lelia's report has been made available to that committee and its recommendations should be a very useful input. In addition, I have made the ISR paper available and will provide other inputs that were done for the CWS outreach.

In her new role of Vice President of the ISI, Denise will be working on structuring ISI policy with respect to membership and committees. The kinds of concerns that she mentioned were: putting limits on the size of committees and length of service on committees, the need for balance in membership, etc. She plans to come up with a strategy for these things during the next two years for committees in general which would in due course help the CWS to manage better the membership question.

The meeting decided that the main action on membership by the CWS in the short term will be to search for qualified members of the 5 Sections and interest and recommend them for ISI membership. Responsibility for the task was divided up as follows:

ISI Section	Focal point
IAOS	Dennis Trewin
IASE	Beverley Carlson
IASS	Denise Lievesley
IASC	Lynne Billard
Bernoulli Society	Lynne Billard

Beverley has written to Daniel Berze to ask the ISI to facilitate our work on this by providing a list of women section members who are not ISI members, for each of the sections separately. Dennis commented that this issue was the top priority of his Presidency.

## **Website Management**

Mary explained the latest revisions she had made to the website before turning website management over to another manager. The site looks great and the amount of effort is evident. Mary told us that she wants to step down from the Committee and felt the Chair who is a focal point for information should manage the site. The most important thing is getting material contributed and Mary had not had much luck in this regard from Committee members. My view is that the web content management is very important and is a big job that one member (and not the Chair) should take it on. It is too much for the Chair to manage the committee and also manage the website. Our first task then is to decide who among us is going to direct the website and manage the content. All members must see web contributions as one of their responsibilities. The content manager could give assignments for specific contributions. Whoever is the content manager would discuss web policy with the Chair and copy the material to the Chair.

Dennis recommended that the website be transferred to become part of the ISI's website. This proposal was supported in general. The advantage would be closer links with the ISI and the physical posting by their webmaster. However this change would still not solve the important problem of having a dedicated content manager.

The content of the website was discussed at length. The design is very attractive and very good with Mary's latest changes. The main issue is what purposes we see in the website and getting appropriate content contributions to the site.

Comments made during this discussion are noted briefly below:

- whether to make it interactive,
- just an information site
- a mixture of committee information, discussion papers,
- a depository,
- an outreach to countries and new members as well as old members of the ISI family,
- put key officers of the ISI itself,
- augment the links

I have written to the winners of the Jan Tinbergen and Cochran-Hansen prizes to tell them we would like to put their papers on the CWS website and asking them to provide a profile of themselves.

Website outreach. Changing to a meaningful domain name would be a good way for people using search engines to find it and also moving the website. Also moving the site as a subsite under the ISI umbrella. This was subsequently followed up with Daniel Berze and the ISI is ready to technically manage the website for us under their principle webpage by their webmaster, Gerda Bolhuis ([GBLS@CBS.NL](mailto:GBLS@CBS.NL)) once the Committee makes up its mind what we want to do and appoints a content manager.

*Note: As Gerda Bolhuis has left the ISI by the end of 2001, all messages should be send to [Mrs. Nanjamma Chinnappa](mailto:Nanjamma Chinnappa) ([nach@blr.vsnl.net.in](mailto:nach@blr.vsnl.net.in)) , who will see to it that the CWS Website will be updated.*

### **ISI Berlin 2003**

I am happy to report that the Programme Committee has informed me that the proposal I submitted on behalf of the CWS has been accepted for the Berlin Programme. Further suggestions are welcome.

#### ***IP 58: The experience of professional women statisticians in professional life.***

The idea is to invite papers from women working in different areas of statistical application and to ask them to reflect on issues that arise in the content of their work as well as the practice of their work. There would be one paper of the experience of women statisticians in clinical statistics, meaning the

development and testing of new drugs and pharmaceuticals and their effect on measuring morbidity, mortality and women's health. Sheila Talwalker, an ISI member and Director of Clinical Statistics at Searle (Pharmacia) would like to prepare this paper. One of the papers would be written by a woman who has had a career in a large institution such as an official statistical agencies (could be co-sponsored with IAOS); another important applications area is banking and financial statistics; I would also like to approach the Special interest Group/Committee on Statistics in Business and Industry for a paper on the experience of women statisticians in business and industry. Another interesting paper could focus on women working in the ICT area (possible co-sponsor with IASC), etc. These initiatives would produce 3-4 papers/panelists. For discussions we can draw from our strong Committee membership.

### **Final Report: A Characterization of Statisticians by Gender in Several Countries**

Many thanks go to Lelia and her team for the preparation of this report, to the Australian Bureau of Statistics for its printing, to ECLAC for its translation and to the ISI for its project support and to Nanjamma her help with the project proposal. Since Lelia was to present the Report in the Open Meeting, we used the Business meeting to discuss its recommendations and followup. The meeting concluded that the many useful recommendations needed to be summarized into the 2 or 3 most important and Lelia was asked to do this. I suggested the need for a few doable actions in the short term while Dennis thought we should "put some runs on the board". The Report has been given to the Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Expansion and Renewal and this has been acknowledged by David Moore. The Report is also being distributed to officers of ISI Section Presidents, Committees, interested parties, and some National Statistical Offices. I have asked Lelia to prepare an introductory note and we will put the full report on the Website.

At Dennis's suggestion, the key short-term action that was agreed at the meeting was the search in the sections for worthy ISI candidates. I expect the lists from the ISI Permanent Office by 4 November. Denise recommended concentrating on the ISI membership and getting women into key positions through making recommendations to the nominating committee for President, VP, etc.

Members are invited to make additional suggestions, having now had time to read the report.

In thinking about followup actions, please bear in mind how this should be carried out: who will do it, with a fair distribution of work among members.

### **Country correspondents/affiliates/representatives**

This topic was not taken up at the meeting. My recommendation is that we organize this around the website and we set up a network of country correspondents who will send in periodic reports, news, and information items to the webmaster for posting. This will be a way for substantial outreach. I plan to ask to the people who attended our Open meeting if they would be interested to serve as correspondents. The contributions could fit easily under Mary's website structure. The contributions in due course can be posted by the ISI web manager.

### **Other business**

Fred Vogel mentioned that the Agriculture Committee is organizing an Agriculture Conference for 2004, hopefully in Buenos Aires, and asked for CWS participation in helping to organize it. We look forward to more information about this and how we can contribute. Lelia is helping Fred with local arrangements. Please keep us informed of developments. At the very least, it would be good to have one or more invited paper sessions on gender, women, statistics and agriculture. Perhaps Fred can guide us on that. The UN's

regional FAO office is here in Santiago (next door to Argentina, and literally next door to ECLAC. The Agricultural economics section is in my division and we also have an active gender group, which might be called on to make contributions if appropriate and if funds for participation are available.

Many thanks to all for your very active participation and constructive suggestions.